

27 February 2023

Written testimony submitted to the Connecticut General Assembly Housing Committee in support of SB 4, An Act Concerning Connecticut's Present and Future Housing Needs.

Dear Representative Luxenberg, Senator Moore, and members of the Housing Committee:

My name is Monica van Beusekom. I am a resident of Storrs-Mansfield and a member of the Unitarian Universalist Society East in Manchester. My congregation is a member of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA), a broad-based organization of 49 faith institutions working together on this issue.

I am testifying in support of a rent cap and in support of SB4, and, in particular, the portion on rent caps with amendments that will better protect tenants:

- **A rent cap of no more than 3%.** This tracks pre-pandemic average rent increases and would be affordable and predictable for tenants.
- **Coverage of apartments in between tenants**, so landlords can't push out tenants to increase rent
- **Expansion of good cause eviction protections** to cover all tenants so they have greater stability in their homes.

I support this bill because all people should have access to a stable and affordable place to live. This is the moral and just thing to do. And it will help to create a Connecticut where fewer people are overburdened by housing costs, renters are more likely to be able to remain in their communities, and fewer people end up homeless.

Rent stabilization is not the only solution to the crisis in affordable housing. But it is one important tool that can have a broad impact since most low-income tenants live in private units rather than in public and subsidized housing. Multiple research studies in communities with rent stabilization -- in Massachusetts, New Jersey, Washington DC, and California -- have shown that rent stabilization does not limit new construction. So a rent stabilization program can exist side-by-side with other policies that incentivize the construction of new housing. Affordable housing is essential to the continued economic vitality of the state.

Coverage between tenants and adding a just cause eviction requirement to this legislation is crucial to ensure that it is effective. This will prevent renters from being pushed out as a strategy to raise the rent in excess of the cap.

Rent stabilization is not only the equitable and just thing to do, it also makes economic sense as one important strategy to address the crisis in affordable housing.

Sincerely,

Monica van Beusekom
Storrs-Mansfield